CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method of transferring users' e-mail accounts from a source server to a destination server, the method comprising:

setting up the destination server to act as a gateway transferring e-mail connections to the source server; and

transferring users' mail folders from the source server to the destination server.

2.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein setting up the destination server comprises allocating the destination server the same IP address as the source server, the method further comprising allocating the source server a new IP address.

3.   A method as claimed in claim 2, further comprising retiring the source server once all e-mail accounts have been transferred.

4.   A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising routing mail connections to users' e-mail accounts via the destination server with a router.

5.   A method as claimed in claim 4, further comprising retiring the source server once all e-mail accounts have been transferred.

6.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein setting up the destination server comprises setting up the destination server to initiate the transfer of the user's mail folder and its contents from the source server to the destination server when each user logs on for the first time.

7.   A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein setting up the destination server comprises allocating the destination server the same IP address as the source server, the method further comprising allocating the source server a new IP address.

8.   A method as claimed in claim 7, further comprising retiring the source server once all e-mail accounts have been transferred.

9.   A method as claimed in claim 6, further comprising routing mail connections to users' e-mail accounts via the destination server with a router.

10.   A method as claimed in claim 9, further comprising retiring the source server once all e-mail accounts have been transferred.

11.   A method as claimed in claim 6, further comprising initiating the transfer of the user's mail folder when each user logs on for the first time before the destination server services the user.

12.   A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein setting up the destination server comprises allocating the destination server the same IP address as the source server, the method further comprising allocating the source server a new IP address.

13.   A method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising retiring the source server once all e-mail accounts have been transferred.

14.   A method as claimed in claim 11, further comprising routing mail connections to users' e-mail accounts via the destination server with a router.

15.   A method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising retiring the source server once all e-mail accounts have been transferred.

16.   A method as claimed in claim 6, further comprising:

causing the destination server to pass the e-mail connection through to the source server when each user logs on for the first time; and

transferring the user's mail folder once the user has logged off.

17.   A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein setting up the destination server comprises allocating the destination server the same IP address as the source server, the method further comprising allocating the source server a new IP address.

18.   A method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising retiring the source server once all e-mail accounts have been transferred.

19.   A method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising routing mail connections to users' e-mail accounts via the destination server with a router.

20.   A method as claimed in claim 19, further comprising retiring the source server once all e-mail accounts have been transferred.

21.   An apparatus for transferring users' e-mail accounts from a source server to a destination server, the apparatus comprising:

a source server on which is set up the e-mail accounts; and

a destination server arranged to receive e-mail accounts as they are transferred from the source server, arranged as a gateway transferring e-mail connections to the source server, and further arranged to initiate transfer of users' mail folders as they each log in.

22.   A computer program product for transferring users' e-mail accounts from a source server to a destination server, the computer program product comprising a computer readable program code configured to cause the destination server to act as a gateway transferring e-mail connections to the source server, and further configured to transfer users' e-mail folders from the source server to the destination server.